



New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau

Division of Forest & Lands

Department of Resources and Economic Development



Natural Heritage Database Requests to Achieve Environmental Compliance

February 21, 2013

Overview



- Who we are
- Database requests
- Landowner requests for forest management plans
- Receipts for Minimum Impact Forestry Notifications

NH Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB)

Division of Forest & Lands
Department of Resources and Economic Development

- The NH Natural Heritage Bureau finds, tracks, and facilitates the protection of New Hampshire's rare plants and exemplary natural communities.
- We work with landowners and land managers to help them protect the State's natural heritage while meeting their land-use needs.
- Our mission is mandated by the Native Plant Protection Act (RSA 217-A)



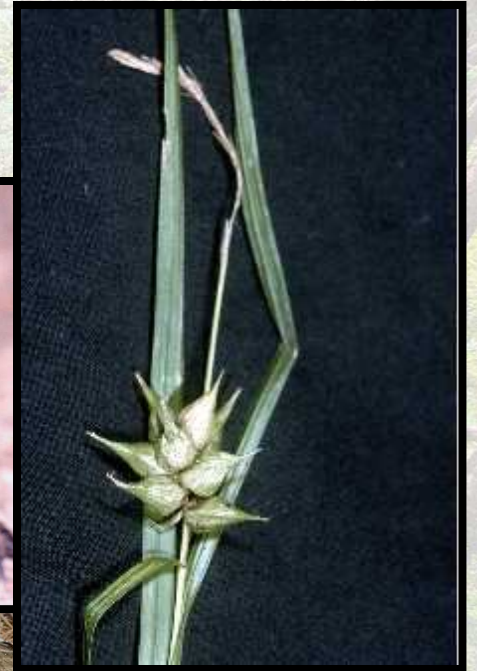
NHB Database



- State & Federally listed plant species
- Exemplary natural communities
- State & Federally listed wildlife species (and SC)

Environmental Review & Database Check

- Federal, state or local agencies may require that you check with NHB to determine if a proposed project will impact (or benefit) rare species or exemplary natural communities



How do I submit a request to NHB?

Submit a request
by email or mail?

Submit a request on-line?

DataCheck Tool?

Hard copy Request Form?



Hard copy request form
specific to Wetlands
Minimum Impact Forestry
Notifications?

Landowner Request Form?

Requesting Natural Heritage Bureau Data

When to use what form...

DataCheck Tool or hard copy request for NHB Database Check

- If a state permit is required, such as:
 - ❖ Shoreland Permit
 - ❖ Standard dredge and fill for wetland impacts
 - ❖ Alteration of terrain permit
 - ❖ Notification of trail development activities
 - ❖ Minimum impact agriculture permit
 - ❖ Notification for minimum impact forestry notifications*



Landowner Request form

- No state permit required, but rare species/exemplary is needed or wanted, such as:
 - ❖ Forest management plans
 - ❖ Tree farm certification requirements
 - ❖ General land use planning
 - ❖ If you're a landowner and just curious if you may have any rare species or exemplary natural communities on your property

*note there is a specific hard copy request form for forestry

www.nhnaturalheritage.org

SERVICES

Information About Rare Species for a Permit or Grant Requirement

NH Heritage maintains a database of known locations of rare species and exemplary natural communities. Federal, state, and local agencies may require a check of this database to determine whether a proposed project could impact rare species or critical habitat. In some circumstances, a \$25 fee will be assessed to cover staff time.

There are two ways to request a check of the NH Heritage database:

1. Use the [DataCheck Tool](#). This is an interactive web page that can be used to provide NH Heritage with basic information about a project, including a map.

If there are no NH Heritage records anywhere in the vicinity, a letter to that effect will be e-mailed at once, automatically, and there is no fee.

If NH Heritage records are in the vicinity, a review by NH Heritage is needed. This review can be requested using the DataCheck Tool. If the \$25 fee is required it must be paid by check or money order.

First Time Users: Please print [instructions](#) for mapping your project using the Tool.

2. Submit a request form to NH Heritage by e-mail or mail.

Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notification ([pdf version](#)) ([MS Word version](#))

All other permit and grant applications ([pdf version](#)) ([MS Word version](#))

[Refund Policy](#)

Landowner Requests (including forest management plans)

NH Heritage can check its database to see if we have any rare plant, rare animal, or exemplary natural community records on your property. Please fill out the [landowner request form](#) to request such a check. There is no fee for this service. However, the results cannot be used for permit requirements (the scope of the database check is different). See above to request information for a permit requirement.

Please note that very little of New Hampshire has been inventoried for biodiversity, so even if something is on your property, it has probably not been recorded. A field survey would provide better information on what species and communities are indeed present. NH Heritage is sometimes able to do property-specific inventories for towns or individuals, but only after we have worked out a formal contract to cover our expenses.

Landowner Request

(for management plans, not permitting)

- Property specific (entire parcel, not just crossing)
- No fee for this service
- Results cannot be used for permit requirements (no review for potential impacts)
- Examples of when to use:
 - Tree farm certification requirements
 - Forest Management Plans
 - General planning





Landowner request for NH Natural Heritage Bureau data

The NH Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) maintains a database of known locations of rare species and exemplary natural communities. Landowners can request a check of the database to find out whether any known locations have been mapped on their property. An agent acting for a landowner can make this request on the landowner's behalf. However, the landowner must be aware of and approve of the request.

The results from this "Landowner Request" cannot be used to satisfy permit or regulatory requirements, since the results are limited to NHB records within property boundaries. For permits, use the "Environmental Review Request Form" available at <http://nh.gov/dred/divisions/forestandlands/bureaus/naturalheritage/forms.htm>.

If there is a rare species on private property, will NH Natural Heritage know about it? Probably not. Most areas of the state have never been checked for the presence of rare species. A field survey is the best way to determine their presence. We provide a list of all known rare species within one mile, as a guide to what *could* be on the property.

What does it mean if NHB *does* have a record on a particular property? It means that a rare species or natural community was once observed in the vicinity and reported to NHB. Check the year of the observation to determine how recent the report was.

Call NHB (271-2214) with questions regarding rare plants and exemplary natural communities, or NH Fish & Game (271-2461) with questions regarding rare animal species.

Landowner: Name: _____
Mailing address: _____
Phone number: _____
E-mail address: _____

Requested by: Name: _____
Organization: _____
Mailing address: _____
Phone number: _____
E-mail address: _____

Location of the Property Town: _____
Tax Map(s) & Lot #(s): _____

A map must be provided, with the property clearly marked. Acceptable maps include a copy of part of a USGS topographic map (such maps can be printed from the web, e.g., at www.topozone.com) and GIS shapefiles* (NH State Plane, NAD 83). Tax maps can **only** be used if they include clearly marked road intersections.

*If a shapefile is provided, what is the file name?: _____

I affirm that the landowner knows that I am making this request and agrees that NHB should release the data.

Name (type or print): _____ **Date:** _____

Requests can be submitted by e-mail, fax, or mail:

E-mail: scairns@dred.state.nh.us

Fax: (603) 271-6488, Attn: Sara Cairns

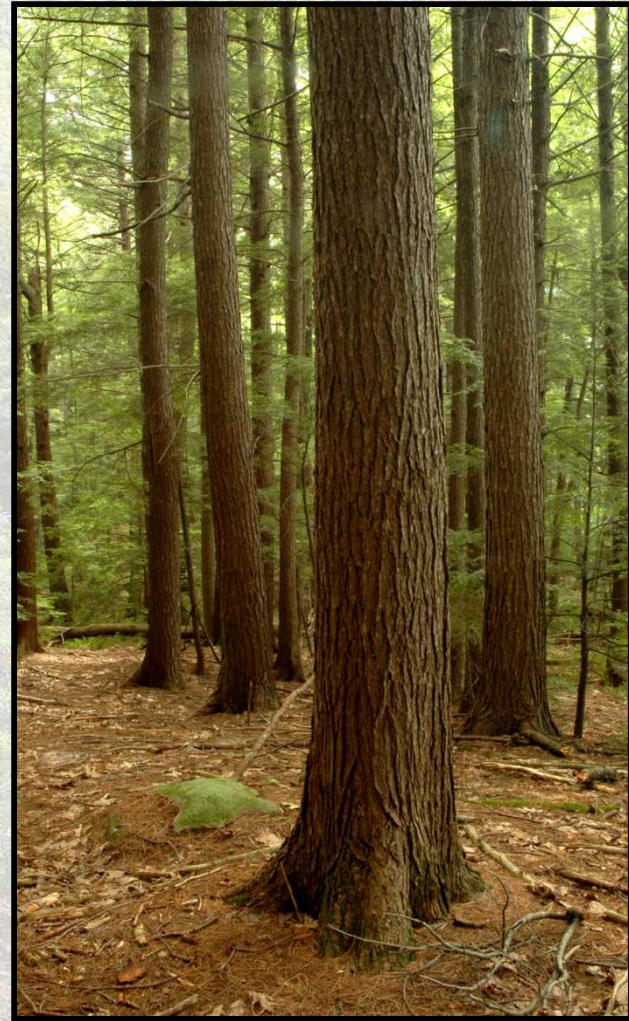
Mail: Sara Cairns
PO Box 1856
Concord, NH 03302-1856

Requests will usually be processed within 5-10 business days. Results will be returned via e-mail if an e-mail address is provided above, otherwise through the US postal service. Call (603) 271-2215 x 302 with any questions.

- Landowner Request Form
 - ❖ Contact info
 - ❖ Map of property (can send shapefile or copy of a topo map)
 - ❖ Very simple and quick to submit!

Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notifications

- DES posted new the Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notification Form on their website in April 2012.
- One of the requirements on the new form is a “**Receipt**” from the Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB).
- NHB has coordinated with the forestry community and DES to make this as smooth and painless as possible by making changes to the Datacheck Tool and review process specific to minimum impact forestry activities.



Old Form vs New Form

(in regards to NHB information)

Old Form

Notification of Forest Management or Timber Harvest Activities having a Minimum Wetlands Impact

- Yes/No question regarding whether the proposed activity is in a wetland identified by Natural Heritage
- No documentation was required showing you actually contacted Natural Heritage
- If “yes” ...the project could not use notification form

New Form

Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notification

- An NHB “receipt” is required to show you have contacted NHB
- No specific info on presence or absence of rare species is given to DES, only the “receipt”
- No longer a threat that a project is kicked out of a notification to a different permit type because of NHB info

Datacheck Tool & Review Changes Specific to the Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notifications

- **There is no fee for Natural Heritage review of minimum impact forestry notifications**
- **NHB Datacheck Receipt**
 - This is a generic letter that shows you have completed the process, it contains no information on whether or not sensitive species or exemplary natural communities are present.
 - This is the **ONLY** document required to submit with the Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notification
 - This avoids the issue of being “kicked up” to a different permit type
- **NHB Datacheck Results letter**
 - Only if the project was screened as “potential impacts”
 - Recommendations to avoid or minimize possible impacts or upon closer inspection reviewer may dismiss concerns completely.
 - **DO NOT** submit this second letter with the Wetland Minimum Impacts Forestry Notification form. The recommendations in the second letter are for your consideration.

Requesting an NHB Database Check for Minimum Impact Forestry Notifications

- Hard copy request form
 - Forestry Specific Form
 - Can be downloaded from www.nhnaturalheritage.org listed as #2 under “Services”
 - Can be mailed by request (271-2215 ext. 323)
- DataCheck Tool
 - www.nhnaturalheritage.org and listed as #1 under “Services”
 - Remember to specify Forestry Notification, so that you don’t pay the fee and do get a “NHB Datacheck Receipt”



Hard Copy Request Form

- Pros

- No computer or computer skills necessary
- Short & simple (no potentially confusing questions)

- Cons

- you have to find a map to provide crossing locations
- Possible snail mail delay
- 3-5 business days for processing



Request for a NH Natural Heritage Bureau Database Check

Valid only for: Notification of forest management or timber harvest activities having minimum wetlands impact

The NH Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) maintains a database of known locations of NH's biodiversity elements. A check of this database helps to determine whether projects could impact rare species or exemplary natural communities. You can request a check either by using this form, or by using the online DataCheck Tool available from www.nhnaturalheritage.org.

Contact Information

Name: _____
Phone number: _____ *E-mail: _____
Mailing address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
*Results will be e-mailed if an e-mail address is provided above, otherwise mailed.

Landowner Permission

☐ As the landowner, I affirm that NHB should release the data.
or
☐ I affirm that the landowner, _____ (print landowner's name) knows that I am making this request and agrees that NHB should release the data.

Signature (if sending digitally, print your name): _____ Date: _____

Project Information

Town: _____
Address or Tax Map & Lot #(s): _____
Short narrative description of the project:

All requests must include the following:

- ☐ A map of the project area (see example on page 2)

Requests can be submitted by e-mail, fax, or mail:

E-mail: nhbreview@dred.state.nh.us

Fax: (603) 271-6488, Attn: NHB Review

Mail: NHB Review
PO Box 1856
172 Pembroke Road
Concord, NH 03302-1856

Requests will be processed within 3-5 business days of the date received. You will be mailed a "NHB DataCheck Receipt" that must be included in your Forestry Notification package.

If the NHB database has records of rare species or exemplary natural communities in the vicinity of your project, you will *also* receive a letter with recommendations for avoiding or minimizing possible impacts. The recommendations are for your consideration. DO NOT include them in your notification package.

Call (603) 271-2215 x 323 with questions.

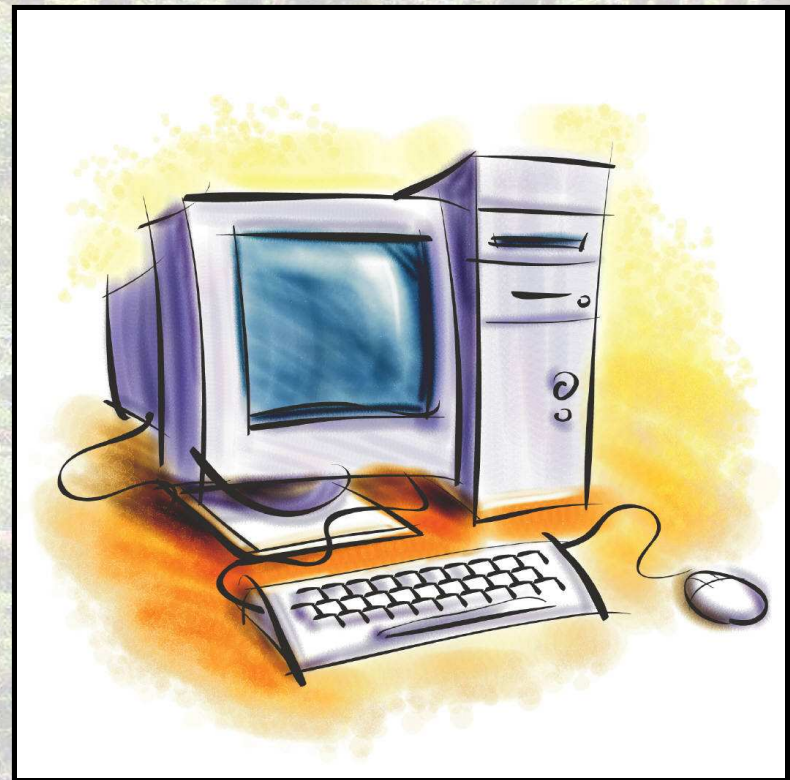
DataCheck Tool

- Pros

- Maps are built into process
- Receipt is generated and emailed immediately
- Easy & efficient (once you have the process down)

- Cons

- Requires a computer
- Learning curve, not so easy the first time....
- Serves a wider audience, so a few more questions



www.nhnaturalheritage.org



DIVISION OF FORESTS AND LANDS

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NATURAL HERITAGE BUREAU

The NH Natural Heritage Bureau finds, tracks, and facilitates the protection of New Hampshire's rare plants and exemplary natural communities (types of forests, wetlands, grasslands, etc.). As a bureau within the Division of Forests & Lands, we are fundamentally a service to New Hampshire landowners and land managers. We are not a regulatory agency; instead, we work with landowners and land managers to help them protect the State's natural heritage while meeting their land-use needs.

Our mission, as mandated by the Native Plant Protection Act of 1987 (RSA 217-A), is to determine protective measures and requirements necessary for the survival of native plant species in the state, to investigate the condition and degree of rarity of plant species, and to distribute information regarding the condition and protection of these species and their habitats. We also maintain information on rare wildlife in cooperation with the NH Fish & Game Department's Nongame & Endangered Wildlife Program, which has legal jurisdiction over New Hampshire wildlife. Visit our About Us page for more information about our organizational structure.

What's Rare in New Hampshire?

[Rare Plants](#)[Rare and Tracked Wildlife](#)[Rare Plants, Wildlife, and Natural Communities by Town](#)[What's New...](#)

TOWER QUEST PROGRAM



Visit 5 New Hampshire Fire Lookout Towers
and Earn a patch.

[Click here for more information](#)

FREE SEEDLING CATALOG

We have the best tree and shrub seedlings -
not imported, not replanted -
but grown from seed right here in NH. Check
us out, try our seedlings, you won't be sorry.

[REQUEST YOUR CATALOG](#)



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SERVICES

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[Refund Policy](#)

Signing In



PROJECT STATUS

- Sign In

■ NHB DataCheck Tool: Sign In

New to NHB DataCheck?

Using this Tool, a project planner may:

1. Locate and Draw a project on an interactive map.
2. Check the project area for NHB records.
3. Depending on the results of the data check:
 1. Save or print a NHB letter (no records nearby); or
 2. Request a further check by NHB (records found nearby).

Need Help?

[Click here](#) to view the help document. The help document may also be viewed by clicking on the wildflower in the upper left corner of any page in the NHB DataCheck Tool.

[Enter as Guest*](#)

OR

[Register Now](#)

Existing Users

Please enter your Email Address, User Name and Password to sign in.

Email Address:

User Name:

Password:

[Sign In](#)

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Quit](#)

Register

*Guests may map project areas and get a preliminary check of the NHB database. However, to get official results you should now sign up as a registered user. There is no fee for registering and you will not be placed on any mailing lists.

■ NHB DataCheck Tool: Preliminary Project Information

Which of the following describes the maximum area (footprint) disturbed by the activities for which a permit or grant is being requested?

- ☐ New footprint (no existing structures)
- ☐ Completely within an existing footprint (repairs, replacement)
- ☐ Expanding an existing footprint (additional area disturbed adjacent to a previously disturbed location)

Will this project be submitted as a *Notification* or *Minimum Expedited* application to the NHDES Wetlands Bureau?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Select "Yes" if you will be submitting any of the following types of applications to the NHDES Wetlands Bureau:

- Minimum Impact Agriculture
- Minimum Impact Expedited
- Notification of Forest Management or Timber Harvest Activities
- Notification of Routine Roadway & Railway Maintenance Activities
- Notification of Trail Development Activities
- Permit by Notification
- Seasonal Dock Notification for Lakes and Ponds

Select "No" if you are submitting a Standard Dredge and Fill Application to the Wetlands Bureau or are not submitting any Wetlands Bureau application.

CAUTION: If you answer "Yes", the letter you receive will be valid *only* for the NHDES Wetlands Bureau application types listed above.

How will you provide the project boundaries to NHB?

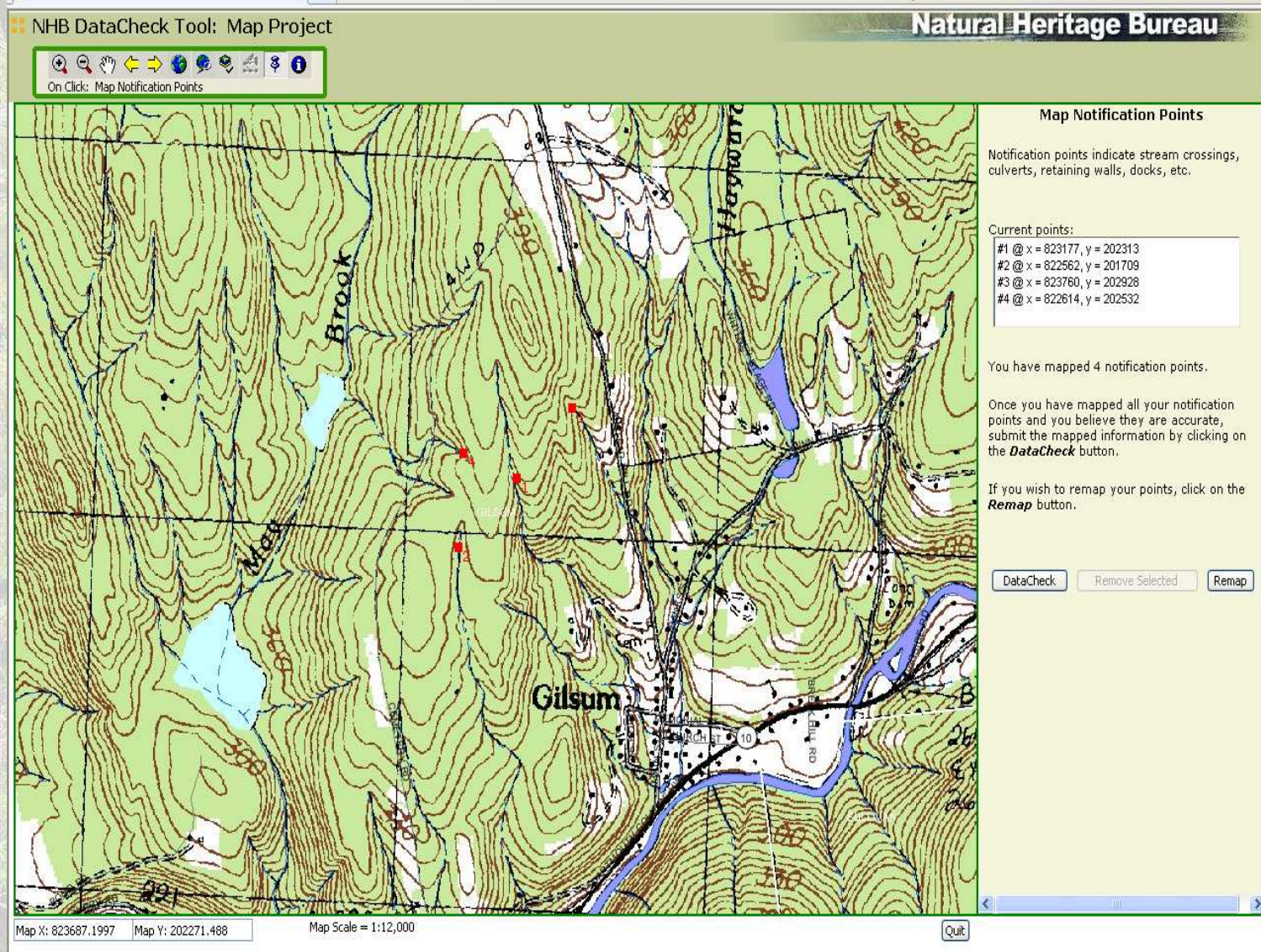
- ☐ I will draw the project boundaries using this Web tool.
- ☐ I will send a shapefile with project boundaries to NHB.
- ☐ I want to send a hard-copy request.

Back

Next

Cancel

New (as of November 2012) for all Notifications Points only, no parcel boundaries



DataCheck Results

Map Notification Points

Notification points indicate stream crossings, culverts, retaining walls, docks, etc.

Current points:

#1 @ x = 823177, y = 202313

#2 @ x = 822562, y = 201709

#3 @ x = 823760, y = 202928

#4 @ x = 822614, y = 202532

DataCheck Results: NO KNOWN RECORDS

There are no known NHB records in the vicinity of the notification points you mapped.

You can request an official report of this result, which will be valid for a period of one year from today.



Map Notification Points

Notification points indicate stream crossings, culverts, retaining walls, docks, etc.

Current points:

#1 @ x = 1026728, y = 257000

#2 @ x = 1027238, y = 257189

#3 @ x = 1027315, y = 256546

#4 @ x = 1027903, y = 256723

DataCheck Results: POTENTIAL IMPACTS

There are NHB records in the vicinity of the notification points you drew that may be affected by this project.

To obtain an official letter to include in your permit application or funding request, please click on "Continue" below to provide additional information about the project.

You must continue in order to get required documentation...



PROJECT STATUS

- Logged In
- Existing projects
- Preliminary project information
- Project boundary mapping
- **Project Details - NHDES Applications**

■ NHB DataCheck Tool: Project Details - NHDES Applications

DataCheck Tool Results: No Known Records. There are no known NHB records in the vicinity of the area you drew.

For applications to be submitted to NHDES, please answer the following questions:

Expected Application Type:

Selected Application Types are disabled because a *Notification* or *Minimum Expedited* application is to be submitted.

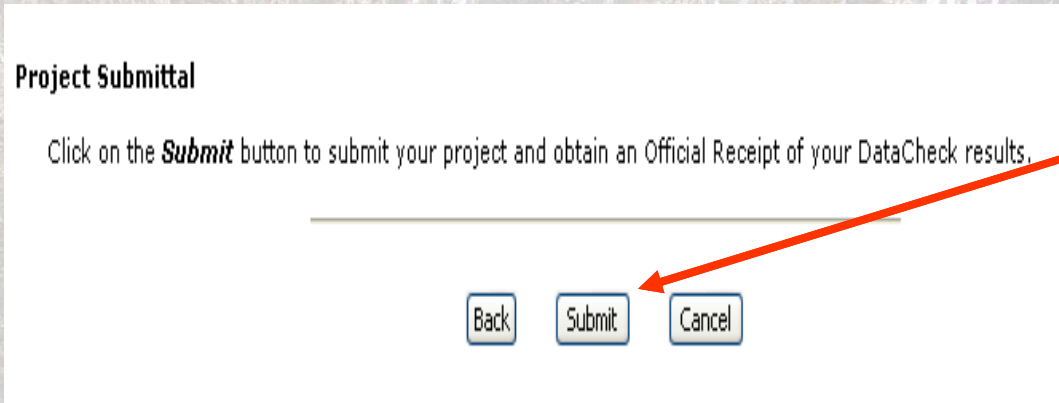
- ☐ Alteration of Terrain
- ☐ Shoreland Permit
- ☐ Wetlands: Standard Dredge and Fill for Wetland Impacts
- ☐ Wetlands: Minimum Impact Agriculture
- ☐ Wetlands: Minimum Impact Expedited
- ☒ Wetlands: Notification of Forest Management or Timber Harvest Activities
- ☐ Wetlands: Notification of Routine Roadway & Railway Maintenance Activities
- ☐ Wetlands: Notification of Trail Development Activities
- ☐ Wetlands: Permit by Notification (not Forestry)
- ☐ Wetlands: Seasonal Dock Notification for Lakes and Ponds

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Next

Cancel

IMPORTANT: You must to select “Notification of Forest Management or Timber Harvest Activities”
This signals the “receipt” process and also exempts you from payment if there were potential impacts



Project Submittal

Click on the **Submit** button to submit your project and obtain an Official Receipt of your DataCheck results.

Very important to hit this “submit” button (saves your project data)

- **NHB Datacheck Receipt (sent within 5 minutes or less)**
 - Completion of process
 - This is the **ONLY** document required to submit with the Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notification
- **NHB Datacheck Results letter (sent within 3-5 business days)**
 - Only if the project was screened as “potential impacts”
 - Recommendations to avoid or minimize possible impacts **or** upon closer inspection reviewer may dismiss concerns completely.
 - **DO NOT** submit this second letter with the Wetland Minimum Impacts Forestry Notification form. The recommendations in the second letter are for your consideration.

Repetition Time!

DataCheck Tool or hard copy request for NHB Database Check

- If a state permit is required, such as:
 - ❖ Shoreland Permit
 - ❖ Standard dredge and fill for wetland impacts
 - ❖ Alteration of terrain permit
 - ❖ Notification of trail development activities
 - ❖ Minimum impact agriculture permit
 - ❖ Notification for minimum impact forestry notifications*



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- No state permit required, but rare species/exemplary is needed or wanted, such as:
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 - ❖ If you're a landowner and just curious if you may have any rare species on your property

*note there is a specific hard copy request form for forestry

Questions?

Contact Information:

Melissa Coppola

Environmental Information Specialist

DRED-Natural Heritage Bureau

mcoppola@dred.state.nh.us

603-271-2215 ext. 323





Section 217-A:9

II. Nothing in this section shall limit the rights of private property owners to take protected species on their own land.



RSA 217:A9

- Exemptions

IV. No rule adopted by the department under the provisions of this chapter shall cause undue interference with normal agriculture or silvicultural practices.